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SUBJECT: DPA PARTNERS DISCUSS WAY FORWARD

Classified By: P/E Chief E. Whitaker, Reason: Section 1.4 (b) and (d)

11. (C) Summary: An August 17 meeting of DPA partners, chaired by visiting UK Special Envoy Pullen, discussed the need to be inclusive, broadening the base of support for the DPA. Strategies discussed included building trust among Darfurians, coordinating support for the DPA, rendering the Ceasefire Commission more effective in resolving security incidents, providing capacity building to rebel movements, and broadening DPA outreach efforts. Charge Hume noted that despite the DPA, the government appears to seek peace on different terms, and is making signs of preparing to attack non-signatory rebel movements. Discussion included the pending UNSC resolution, and the lack of success in obtaining Sudan's approval for a peacekeeping operation in Darfur to take over for AMIS. The DPA partners agreed to meet hereafter biweekly. End summary.

UK Special Envoy Pullen: Broader Base Needed for DPA

12. (C) On August 17, the UK hosted a meeting for DPA partners to discuss the situation in Darfur and how best to coordinate support for the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA). Amb. Rob Pullen, visiting UK Special Envoy on Darfur, chaired the 90-minute meeting, which included participation by the AU, UN, UK, EU, the Netherlands, Canada, Norway, and France. In his opening remarks, Pullen noted that although there was broad support among the partners for the DPA, the fact that it had only two signatories of four negotiating parties remained an impediment to its implementation. Non-signatories should not be excluded, and should be encouraged to participate in DPA-related activities, rather than leave the DPA paralyzed, without political space for debate on its merits. Prospects of either Abdel Wahid or Khalil Ibrahim joining the DPA were illusory; rather than pursuing them in Asmara, perhaps it would be more productive to pursue DPA acceptance on the ground in Darfur. Facilitating this should start in areas where useful political work can be carried out, while at the same time convincing Minni Minawi to broaden the base of support for the DPA by reaching out to the Fur.

DPA Partners Share Views on DPA, CFC, Coordination

13. (C) During the ensuing discussion, DPA partners made the following observations:

-- The Netherlands Charge noted that there were many Darfur peace initiatives underway, but that a fundamental lack of trust between Minawi and Abdel Wahid did not permit an organizational reconstitution on the part of the SLM. Those that favor peace look to the international community for coordination and oversight for DPA-supporting activities.

-- UN Chief Political Advisor Christofides stressed the importance of ensuring that the Ceasefire Commission operates effectively, by dealing with problems promptly. He added that the JEM is not as irrelevant as many had thought. He urged support for practical aspects of the DPA, reminding partners that they could provide non-lethal assistance to the rebel movements. DPA commissions need to be broadly based, he said, with a focus less on Zaghawa and more on Darfurian.

-- UN Political Advisor Rogers noted an early warning system needed to be implemented to prevent attacks, as reports come up daily of movements by various forces in advance of hostilities.

-- The African Union DPA Implementation Chief Sam Ibok said UN civil affairs work in Darfur needed to show dividends and be coordinated with efforts of the AU to support the DPA. He said that it was important not to become overly reliant upon the possibility of Abdel Wahid agreeing to join the DPA; many spoke to him, often through intermediaries, and it is important that DPA partners coordinate outreach efforts better, while also reaching out to other stakeholders. He thanked the USG for providing the two DPA Implementation Offices, which he said were concrete contributions to the DPA process. Ibok cautioned DPA partners to be clear on the objectives of the Darfur-Darfur Dialogue and Consultation (DDDC) Preparatory Committee, and to ensure that it deal with both political and security issues. The process should take advantage of the UK media team, and provide a political message. Ibok added that the decision to exclude non-signatories from the Ceasefire Commission and Joint Commission came after lengthy discussion on how to hold productive working sessions and engage a broad range of

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parties. He indicated that although it was a mistake for AMIS to issue an order for non-signatories to vacate AMIS facilities, their involvement in past meetings had not been productive.

-- Canadian Charge Bones recalled that implementation of the DPA was a means to re-establish security, and not a goal in of itself. Although a key principle of what partners seek to accomplish in Darfur, the DPA is a tool to engage stakeholders.

-- Charge Hume agreed with the notions of gaining DPA support by Abdel Wahid, expanding DPA outreach, and making the Ceasefire Commission work effectively. He observed that we cannot want peace more than the Sudanese do. It would be fine if the Sudanese acted as if they had confidence in the DPA as a mechanism to bring peace; there are signs, however, that the Sudanese government wants peace on different terms than those provided for in the DPA. Those calling for a unilateral approach were on the ascendancy, and it is likely that the military plans of three years ago are being resurrected, with the same untoward consequences likely. Even as vehicles are being stolen and humanitarian killings are on the rise, the government's attitude reflects a belief that since it signed the DPA, those who did not who cause trouble are fair game.

-- Amb. Pullen agreed, and said that his conversations with DPA GNU lead negotiator and President Advisor Magzoub al-Khalifa led him to the same conclusion. The government's actions will not bring peace to Darfur; they did not last time and they will not this time, either.

-- UK Charge Evans said a second option was a UN transition, although the consensus among DPA partners was that this did not appear likely. Perhaps newly nominated DDDC Preparatory Commission Chair Abdel Mohamed could talk with the DPA partners and address accelerating its acceptance by the Sudanese government.

-- The AU's Sam Ibok differed, stating that doing so would be to put the cart before the horse, as the Prep Comm is not in office yet. He agreed that coordination and a systematic approach by DPA partners was good, and that both the DDDC and the Darfur Joint Assessment Mission were key to anchoring peace in Darfur. That said, the government is making its own plans, and is negotiating its own position. Partners, however, can influence the DPA implementation process, and assist the rebel movements in participating. While the government has capacities and resources, the movements can barely arrange transportation and coordinate meetings.

-- A UK advisor said the government was enforcing security, as it said it would do. The government is re-supplying Darfur operations nightly, and seems committed to a military solution. The DPA partners should consider meeting every two weeks, and allow both the AU and the UN to present security problems, and then decide whether or not to lobby parties. The AU, however, is seen as partial in Darfur, and the Ceasefire Commission has only two partners.

-- Charge Hume added that there was a palpable risk of rising violence over the next two months, and that coordination among DPA partners was thus essential.

DPA Partners Agree to Meet Again; UNSCR Raised

14. (C) The UK Embassy will circulate action points from the meeting, and will make arrangements for the DDDC Prep Comm Chair to meet with the partners in September. Other topics for further discussion include non-lethal support for rebel movements, resources from the international community, and unilateral DPA implementation on the part of the Sudanese government. Pullen raised the matter of a transition to a UN peacekeeping operation and AMIS capacity. Christofides said that the UNSC would be briefed later the same day regarding the draft resolution on Darfur; partners need to discuss what to do if AMIS ends, particularly as a UN peacekeeping operation will take time to implement. He cited a need for interim support and for practical coordination during a transition. Evans raised the matter of an eventual Darfur Assessment and Evaluation Commission; he circulated a non-paper on it and mentioned that the AU was undertaking preliminary discussions with CPA AEC Chair Vraalsen. Ibok also noted the August 22 DPA stakeholders meeting, slated to take place in El Fasher.
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